

WASHINGTON (February 16) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) discussed the status of the Northern Beltline, efforts to reduce the national debt, and the cost of federal regulations at a Birmingham Business Alliance fly-in today.

Bachus invited House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica to address the group on transportation issues. Bachus said he has assurances that language which could jeopardize funding for Northern Beltline won't be included in the upcoming version of a new federal highway bill.

"The Northern Beltline is part of our future. It will round out our local transportation system," Bachus said, reaffirming his commitment to the completion of the project.

Addressing the budget cuts being debated on the House floor this week, Bachus said the long-term solution to significantly reducing the national debt is entitlement reform, especially of the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

"The only alternative to making painful cuts in the discretionary budget is doing something about entitlements. Medicaid is a broken program. One answer is to give the states much more flexibility," Bachus said.

Bachus said growing the economy will help to reduce the debt as well. He said costly new federal regulations are placing a drag on economic growth and listened to comments from audience members concerned about mandates being imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency and other federal agencies.